

# 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

## GAME INSTRUCTIONS

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## **12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS CHARITY CHALLENGE GAME**

Hello, hello, hello all my campfire friends. Welcome to my newest game called the ***“12 Days of Christmas Charity Challenge Game.”***

In the true spirit of Christmas, this game is intended to create copious amounts of laughter and lead to massive doses of fun being had by all.

All of this merriment will, of course, lead to huge amounts of healthy stress hormones and brain chemicals being produced by our over-stressed bodies.

First up is Oxytocin, the trust and love hormone, which we can get from positive human interactions, such as those found at really fun Christmas parties.

Next up, we have Endorphins and Nitric Oxide, which we can get from singing loudly (and maybe badly), and by adding a physical component to the game such as adding some really crazy dance moves in each round as we all sing our little hearts out; not to mention all the cheering, hooting and hollering that will be needed. Here is a [great version of the 12 Days of Christmas](#) that all game players can feel free to adapt their own way if they wish.

And last, but certainly not least, is Dopamine, which comes from doing nice things for others such as donating to our favorite charities and by cheering on our team mates. There is nothing better for our health than activating the natural reward center of the brain without using artificial means.

And, of course, by solving the puzzles, we will also be able to exercise our brains a little and build some wonderful new synaptic connections to replace all the ones that we exploded all through the year.

So be sure sing loud, solve the puzzles, give to all your favorite charities, cheer on your team mates, post your videos, tag your friends to play too, have fun, and laugh a lot.

We'll see you 'round the campfire soon,

Camp Counsellor Jill

## **12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS CHARITY CHALLENGE GAME INSTRUCTIONS**

### **FIVE SIMPLE STEPS**

#### **Step 1: PICK A CHARITY AND GET YOUR GAME PIECES READY**

The GAME HOST chooses the charity before the game begins and all players are instructed about what to bring to use as playing pieces. Examples are outlined below.

- Food Bank: Each team/player needs twelve (12) non-perishable food items to donate to the Food Bank. These do not have to be expensive. For example, it could be a 12-pack of canned soup bought at a bulk sale or a 12-pack of macaroni dinner.
- Thrift Shops: Each team/player needs twelve (12) clean, gently-used items to donate to your favorite thrift shop. Invite the players to go through closets and drawers to find twelve used items to donate.
- SPCA: The playing pieces can be unopened cans or bags of food. Please, do not open a bag of pet food and put kibble in small baggies as these cannot be accepted at shelters.
- All Charities: Really, any charity could be chosen, but there must be twelve items available to use as playing pieces per team/player. It is also a great idea to just use denominations of money as the playing pieces. Charities are always happy to accept your cash donations after all. If each team/player uses coins or bills, these could become the charity playing pieces. Feel free to be creative, however.

#### **Step 2: GET SOME FRIENDS & FAMILY TOGETHER**

The game can be played in a small group of friends at home or at Christmas parties throughout the Christmas season.

It can be played with as few as two individual players, plus the host, or it can be played with dozens of players who all play on teams. A few close friends will be a ton of fun, but a large group will be a whopping great time. At a Christmas party, each team might be one table of guests, for example.

Join the **#12 Days Charity Challenge Game Club** to get future versions of the game to play at other events and special holiday gatherings.

### **Step 3: PLAY THE GAME (Basic Version)**

(Join the **12 Days Charity Challenge Game Club** for advanced level game instructions.)

You Will Need:

#### Playing Pieces

12 per person or team

See ideas in Step 1 for playing pieces

#### Chocolate

There are 12 rounds of play/12 chances to win and after each round of play, the winning team/player will be invited to **“TAKE A CHOCOLATE”** or **“TAKE A CHANCE”**.

The host should provide enough pieces of chocolate so there are two pieces of chocolate for each winning player after each round. For example, if each team has one person, then the host must provide 24 chocolates (2 chocolates per winner X 12 rounds of play). If the teams have six persons each, then the host must provide 144 pieces of chocolate (2 chocolates per winning team member X 12 rounds of play).

But don't worry, because most likely you won't use all the chocolate; not even close. Even though there is a very slim chance that all the winners will choose to **“TAKE A CHOCOLATE”** after every round, please note that this outcome it is highly unlikely. Never fear... you will have more than enough chocolate left over to eat by yourself when all the festivities have ended.

#### Grand Prize

This is optional, but to make the game a little more interesting, the host can provide a grand prize that can be divided up between the team members on the overall winning team after 12 rounds of play. Ideas for prizes are provided further down.

#### Cryptogram Puzzle Books, Answer Keys & Song Books

These are all provided at the end of these instructions. Just print out the cryptogram puzzles and make enough copies so each player or team can be given the next puzzle at the start of each round. If you have teams playing, you may only want to give two or three copies to each team. Feel free to use recycled paper. Of course, you only need one answer key and you will need one song book each for individual players or a couple of songbooks for each team.

#### Pencils & Erasers

You will need pencils and erasers for each team so they can solve the cryptogram puzzles.

How To Play:

Each round of play begins with all the players singing one verse of “The 12 Days of Christmas.”

Each round of play involves solving a Christmas themed, cryptogram puzzle, based on the song called, The 12 Days of Christmas. The puzzles to be solved are all lines from well-known Christmas carols. The clues given in each puzzle are drawn from all the letters from one verse of the song.

For example, in round one, the clues given in the puzzle are all the letters that can be found in the phrase, “A - P-A-R-T-R-I-D-G-E - I-N - A - P-E-A-R - T-R-E-E.” Each round and puzzle uses a different verse and the corresponding letters.

For people who don’t know the songs, the song books are made available so the phrases can be looked up as letters and words are discovered.

If the puzzles seem too challenging, the host can give clues from time to time drawn from the answer key, which is provided.

Rather than staple the puzzle books together, the host may choose to hand out puzzles only one at a time at the beginning of each round to prevent people from working ahead.

If the game is played with groups or teams in a large group setting and if you happen to have the right equipment, the cryptogram puzzles can be projected on the wall and each team can be given the clue card and the solver sheet to fill in. That way each team can designate a team member to be the recorder but the whole team can participate in solving the puzzle. Teams can be made up of any number of people.

For example, at a company Christmas party, a team might be one full table of guests. At a family gathering, a team might be just 2-3 people. The games can also be played in small families and each team can be just one person.

### **WINNING A ROUND**

The team or individual that solves the puzzle **FIRST** must stand up and start singing the song they think the line is from. If they sing the correct song, they are declared the winner of that round. The correct song is listed on the answer key.

### **LOSING TEAMS MUST DONATE TO CHARITY**

Losing teams must sacrifice a playing piece (item for charity). Once a team is declared a winner after each puzzle is solved, all the other teams or players must sacrifice a charity item; either a nonperishable food item if the charity is the Food Bank or a used item if the charity is a thrift store or a denomination of money or some other item if a different charity was chosen.

### **WINNERS OF ROUNDS CAN “TAKE A CHOCOLATE” OR “TAKE A CHANCE”**

Upon winning the round of play, the winning team/player can choose to just “**TAKE A CHOCOLATE**” and then the round is over and they get to enjoy a chocolate.

However, they can also choose to “**TAKE A CHANCE**” to select from the four possible prize baskets instead.

#### **Four Baskets**

The host will have a table or tray set up somewhere in the room, with 3 or 4 baskets/bowls (depending on version of game being played).

Each basket/bowl is clearly labelled with numbered markers (1...2...3...4) that can be seen easily by all teams/players. Download the labels at the end of these instructions.

One basket/bowl is placed behind each marker. Each basket/bowl contains a single slip of paper that has one of the following statements:

Basket #1: Double Chocolate

Basket #2: Donate to Charity

Basket #3: No Chocolate, No Charity Donation

Basket #4: Big Money or Big Prize

(only add this 4<sup>th</sup> basket if you are playing the advanced version of the game)

The winning team/player simply states if they want basket 1, 2, 3 or 4 and the host reveals what they won.

- Basket #1: Double Chocolate - All the team members get two chocolate prizes instead of one.
- Basket #2: Donate to Charity - The team/player must forfeit a charity item.
- Basket #3: No Chocolate, No Charity Donation – This is the neutral basket.
- Basket #4: Big Money or Big Prize - Only add this 4<sup>th</sup> basket if you are playing the advanced version of the game. With this basket, the team members all get a small prize to share. Feel free to make this basket as simple or complicated (cheap or expensive) as you wish.

If you need ideas for what to use as prizes other than money, feel free to check out [stocking stuffer ideas](#) or [advent calendar filler ideas](#) on Pinterest.

After each round, the baskets/bowls should be briefly removed from the view of the teams, mixed up and then placed back up on the table behind the numbered markers in a random fashion.

### **MOVING ON TO THE NEXT ROUND**

Upon completion of each round, the game returns to the next verse of the song and the next puzzle. Gameplay continues until all 12 verses of the song have been sung and all 12 puzzles have been solved.

### **AFTER 12 ROUNDS OF PLAY**

After the round of play, the last team or player to still have charity items that have not been surrendered yet is declared the winner and is the receiver of the grand prize for the game. The winning team or player must sacrifice their final charity item in order to get the grand prize.

Play this game in a small group 1st with individual players to get good at the game, and then play it in a large group with teams and have a blast.

### **Step 4: MAKE AND POST A QUICK VIDEO**

- All the players are encouraged to make a video, in which they pose with all the loot they collected on behalf of the chosen charity (the playing pieces).
- In the video, the group should say their names or their team names.
- The group should also say, "We are playing the **#12dayscharitychallenge** for (*and then name the charity*). For example,
  - "We are playing the **#12dayscharitychallenge** for the Food Bank" or
  - "We are playing the **#12dayscharitychallenge** for the Salvation Army."
- The whole group of players should then sing the 12<sup>th</sup> verse of "***The Twelve Days of Christmas.***" The lyrics are included in the song book.
- At the end, of the short video, everyone should shout out a holiday cheer of some kind, such as Merry Christmas or Seasons Greetings. [This link will take you to a list of holiday greetings in many world languages.](#) Feel free to be creative.
- Once the video is created, use the hashtag **#12dayscharitychallenge** to post your video to Instagram, Facebook, Vine and Twitter. Don't forget to tag 12 friends to play the game and post their videos. Share as much as possible. Help make the game go viral, so Ellen plays it on her show.
- In really large groups, you can extend the fun by having the teams make up team names and team chants to use if they win a round and also to use on the video.

### **Step 5: DONATE YOUR PLAYING PIECES TO YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY**

*(But keep... and eat... your winnings, of course)*

All charities are encouraged to make public their preferred donations. For example, Habitat for Humanity may want gift cards for building supplies. The game can also be played with cash donations for any charity.

## **JOIN THE GAME CLUB TO GET FREE BONUSES**

One set of cryptograms is provided in the basic version of the game as well as all the tools you need to get started playing your first game.

### **BONUSES**

- |                     |                        |                 |
|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1) New Puzzles      | 3) Charities Wish List | 5) Leaderboards |
| 2) Advanced Version | 4) Updates             | 6) Game Tips    |

### **Bonus #1: NEW PUZZLES**

By joining the #12DaysCharityChallenge Game Club, you can get additional puzzles to use to play the game again and again. Future versions of the game will be developed around other holidays and special events as well.

### **Bonus #2: BIG MONEY/FUNDRAISER GAME VERSION**

You will receive instructions for playing the advanced version of the game, in which you can win some real money and increase the fun all around. This version would be a great fundraiser to use for the charities, especially in service clubs like Rotary or Lions.

### **Bonus #3: CHARITIES WISH LIST**

You will receive instructions for playing the advanced version of the game, in which you can win some real money and increase the fun all around. This version would be a great fundraiser to use for the charities, especially in service clubs like Rotary or Lions.

### **Bonus #4: UPDATES**

You will receive instructions for playing the advanced version of the game, in which you can win some real money and increase the fun all around. This version would be a great fundraiser to use for the charities, especially in service clubs like Rotary or Lions.

### **Bonus #5: LEADER BOARDS**

There are 9 leadership levels for this game as outlined below. As you host games, you can work your way up through the leadership levels and get mentioned on the leader boards on the Facebook page for the game. Each time you host a game, you simply fill in a form on the website and it will be submitted to me for review.

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1) Charity Chap        | Hosted 1 Game  |
| 2) Charity Chum        | Hosted 3 Games |
| 3) Charity Cheerleader | Hosted 3 Games |
| 4) Charity Charmer     | Hosted 5 Games |
| 5) Charity Chief       | Hosted 7 Games |

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 6) Charity Challenger  | Hosted 9 Games  |
| 7) Charity Chamberlain | Hosted 11 Games |
| 8) Charity Chancellor  | Hosted 13 Games |
| 9) Charity Champion    | Hosted 15 Games |

### **Bonus #6: GAME TIPS**

Learn new ways to play the game, do the challenge, have fun and raise even more for your favorite charities.